

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

SPEECH DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON THE 20th APRIL, 1880, BY

HON. WM. MACDOUGALL,
ON MR. BLAKE'S RESOLUTION.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: I rise with some reluctance, and—I may as well confess it—with some trepidation, to offer a few observations upon the Resolution or question before the House. We have been debating the Pacific Railway, and its relations with British Columbia, for three days and for three nights, and the question is still before us. My impression is that the speeches we have had from the other side of the House, and the arguments employed to induce this House not to go into Committee, but to adopt a Resolution not to proceed with the Railway in British Columbia, would carry us—if we listened to them, if they had weight with us—a great deal further. For my part, if I viewed this question as the hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Blake) views it, if I believed the country to be in a condition of hopeless poverty, as he declares it to be; if I believed its financial resources were as limited, as unproductive as he represents them to be; if I thought our hopes of the future would not justify further expenditure on Capital Account, for any purpose whatever in the North-West, because the competition of the United States for the emigrant populations of the Old World will prevent us from selling, or settling, our waste lands in that part of the Dominion, instead of asking this House to declare that the further prosecution of the work of building the Pacific Railway should be postponed, I would take the ground that it ought to be abandoned. I should say, at least, that we ought not to proceed further than the Red River, and allow the settlement of the country beyond that point to provide for itself. The hon. member for West Durham, and some of his colleagues, on that side of the House, have presented to us certain alleged facts—I prefer to call them statements—and they have reasoned at great length upon them; but, admitting the premises, his conclusion, as I have said, is a very lame and impotent one. I will ask the indulgence of the House, while I go back to an earlier chapter in the history of this question, than that which the hon. gentleman de-

tailed to us. I do so for the purpose of showing that there are reasons why members of this House ought not to concur in the doctrine set up, in some quarters, as to the obligations of Canada towards British Columbia, respecting the Pacific Railway. I deny that there is any evidence to support the statement that we are under a Treaty obligation with British Columbia to expend millions and millions of money, whether we can afford it or not, to build this Railway. In the first place it may be well to glance at the history of British Columbia, prior to 1867. In 1858, gold discoveries were made in that country. Prior to 1866, there were two Governments in existence, one for the Island of Vancouver, and another for the main land; but they were not popular or representative Governments. The population was very small, mostly miners and traders. It was composed of Americans as well as Canadians, and foreigners from various countries, who had gone into that country in search of gold to better their fortunes. In 1866, a single Government was established. It was that of a Crown colony, and was directly under the control of the Colonial Secretary; but when Canada and the Maritime Provinces had agreed to form a Confederation, and while the Act of Union was under discussion, a number of persons in British Columbia desired to bring about the Union of that Colony with the old Provinces of Canada. An agitation took place, public meetings were held, speeches were made, and Resolutions passed, declaring that such a Union was expedient in the highest degree. Canada had not then sought to induce British Columbia in favour of the Union, though it was no doubt a part of the great scheme of 1864, for uniting all the Provinces of British America under one Government. It was then contemplated that British Columbia would, at some time, become a part of the Confederacy, and provision was made that Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and British Columbia might come into the Union upon such terms as might be agreed upon between Canada and them, subject to the approval of the Imperial Government. But up to 1868, British Columbia was a

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Crown colony; it was a Government controlled and directed from the Colonial Office, and it so continued until it became a Province of Canada. In 1868, a memorial, based on resolutions passed at public meetings, was sent to Canada. That memorial expressed the strong desire of the people to join the new Confederacy, and it was in consequence of these popular movements in British Columbia, that action was taken in Canada, an Order in Council passed, and negotiations begun with the Imperial Government. It might be as well to refer to the statements made at that time, by the citizens of British Columbia. In the Sessional Papers of 1867-8, we find the Resolutions as they were passed, and the Order-in-Council adopted by the Canadian Government thereupon. The following passages from that Order, under date of 6th March, 1868, will explain the position, at that time, of the Canadian Government:—

"The Committee have had under consideration, a Memorandum, dated 5th March, 1868, from the hon. the Minister of Public Works, stating that certain Resolutions, on the subject of Union with Canada, adopted at a public meeting of the inhabitants of Victoria, British Columbia, on the 29th January last, transmitted through the Hon. Samuel L. Tilley, to the Secretary of State for Canada, were on the 3rd instant, referred to a Committee of the honourable the Privy Council, and by the Council referred to him, the hon. the Minister of Public Works, for immediate report. That he has read and duly considered the purport of these Resolutions, the circumstances under which they were passed and the action which ought to be taken by the Government of Canada thereupon.

"That it appears from these Resolutions and the Memorial of the Committee appointed at the public meeting, which accompanies them, that the Legislative Council of British Columbia, on the 18th March, 1867, unanimously adopted a Resolution, requesting His Excellency Governor Seymour 'to take measures without delay to secure the admission of British Columbia into the Canadian Confederacy on fair and equitable Terms.'"

It appears further:

"That neither the people of British Columbia, nor the Government of Canada have been apprised of any measures that may have been taken by the Government of British Columbia in pursuance of the Resolution of the Legislative Council."

Then, after referring to the fact that this action of the people and the Legislative Council took place before the British North America Act came into force, and

that further action would, therefore, be necessary on the part of British Columbia under the 146th section of that Act, the hon. the Minister of Public Works—which office I then had the honour to hold—made a recommendation which the Order-in-Council recites in these words:

"The hon. Minister submits, that considering the peculiar constitution of the Legislature and Government of British Columbia, and that notwithstanding the Resolution of the Legislative Council, in March of last year, and the Resolutions of the public meetings, and the expression of public opinion through the Press of the Colony, before and since the Act of Confederation, in favour of Union with Canada, no official communication on the subject from British Columbia has reached this Government, he would recommend that Your Excellency communicate to His Grace the Duke of Buckingham a copy of the Memorial and Resolutions referred to, and request His Grace to instruct Governor Seymour to take such steps as may be deemed proper to move the Legislative Council of British Columbia to further action in terms of the Imperial Act. He further recommends that His Grace be informed that the Government of Canada will be prepared to submit to Parliament a proposal for the admission of British Columbia into the Union, in the expectation that the Imperial Government will lose no time in transferring the intervening North-Western Territory to the jurisdiction of the Canadian Government."

The Privy Council concurred in these recommendations, and transmitted them to the Colonial Minister. But it may be interesting to the House to hear two or three passages from the memorial of the citizens of Victoria, and certain members of the Legislative Council, on which our Orders-in-Council was based. It informed us that:

"The people of Cariboo, the next most populous and influential portion of the Colony, held in December a highly enthusiastic meeting, and unanimously passed Resolutions in favour of immediately joining the Dominion of Canada."

It informed us that all the newspapers except one, five in number, supported Confederation. The hostile paper was in favour of annexation to the United States. It informed us that:

"The Legislative Council, the only Legislative body in the Colony, is made up of a majority consisting of Heads of Departments, Gold Commissioners, Magistrates and others subject to Government influence, and cannot be relied upon to urge Confederation, as it ought to be at the present juncture," and, therefore, they appealed to Canada to help them.

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The Memorialists said :

"We feel that without the help and support of the Government of the Dominion, the time will be remote when this Colony will be admitted into the Dominion, but with the aid which we solicit we believe that there is no obstacle to prevent our admission by the 1st of July next."

And to allay all apprehension as to terms, they specified them as follows :—

"1. Canada to become liable for the Public Debt of the Colony, estimated at \$1,500,000.

"2. Canada to provide for Federal officers and services.

"3. To grant a fixed subsidy and *per capita* subsidy sufficient to ensure the support of the Local Government, in addition to the powers of taxation reserved to Provincial Governments in the British North America Act.

"4. Representation in the Senate and Commons of Canada.

"5. The construction of a trans-continental wagon road from Lake Superior to the head of navigation on the Lower Fraser, within two years after the time of admission. This is regarded as an essential condition.

"6. Popular representative institutions, insuring responsible control over the Government.

It will be seen that the British Columbians were very reasonable in their demands when soliciting our help to escape from an arbitrary and irresponsible Government. They did not even hint at a Pacific Railway then. And who were the influential signers of this memorial? The first is James Trimble, Mayor of Victoria; A. DeCosmos, member of the Legislative Council; J. H. Powell, M.D., member for Victoria in the late Assembly for Vancouver Island. The others I need not mention. Now, that was the initiatory proceeding for the admission of British Columbia into the Union. I think, Sir, that, recalling those circumstances, the statement of the hon. member for West Durham, that Canada applied any coercion, or was guilty of any improper solicitation for the purpose of inducing British Columbia to join Canada, is not borne out by the facts. The negotiations went on, and in the meantime, the late Sir George Cartier and myself were deputed to proceed to England for the purpose of arranging with the Hudson's Bay Company and the British Government for the acquisition of the intervening territory. In 1869, we completed an arrangement by which the great North-West became the property of Canada, at a cost of £300,000 sterling.

Then the admission of British Columbia became a matter of serious consultation and interest with the Imperial authorities; and it was again pressed upon the Secretary of State for the Colonies that there was objection and hesitation on the part of the officials of British Columbia to come into the Union, except upon terms that would prove onerous to the Dominion, and he was urged to use his influence and authority—the policy of uniting all the Provinces and Colonies in British America having been affirmed in an Imperial Act—to induce the local authorities of British Columbia to agree to practicable and reasonable Terms of Union with Canada. That effort was made by the Colonial Minister, whose despatch to the then Governor of British Columbia, urging a speedy and amicable union with Canada is on record. Mr. Musgrave, who had previously been Governor of Newfoundland, and had taken a very warm interest in the subject of Confederation, was appointed Governor of British Columbia for the purpose of carrying out the wishes of the people as expressed in their memorial. The then Secretary for the Colonies, Lord Granville, in writing to Governor Musgrave, makes use of some expressions which have an important bearing on the view of the question I am endeavouring to present :

"The question," says Lord Granville, "presents itself whether this single Colony should be excluded from the great body politic which is thus forming itself. On this question the Colony itself does not appear to be unanimous. But as far as I can judge from the despatches which have reached me, I should conjecture that the prevailing opinion was in favour of Union. I have no hesitation in stating that such is also the opinion of Her Majesty's Government."

That definite instruction and command was communicated to the Queen's representative in British Columbia on the 14th August, 1869. As to the dependent and subordinate position of the Colony at that time, His Lordship observed :

"The Constitutional connection of Her Majesty's Government with the Colony of British Columbia is as yet closer than with any other part of North America, and they are bound, on an occasion like the present, to give, for the consideration of the community and the guidance of Her Majesty's servants, a more unreserved expression of their wishes and judgment than might be elsewhere fitting."

In consequence of that pressure from the

Imperial authorities, upon the reluctant authorities of British Columbia—for, as I have shown, the people had already appealed to Canada for help—the negotiations for a Union proceeded. I will now read the "Terms" proposed by the Governor in Council of the Colony in more detail, and in official form, under those instructions and this pressure. I would call the particular attention of the House to those Terms as they were presented at Ottawa, especially the clause relating to internal transit, or "a trans-Continental road." I find it expressed in the official and formal propositions of the delegates sent to Ottawa in these words:

"8. Inasmuch as no real Unions can subsist between this Colony and Canada without the speedy establishment of communication across the Rocky Mountains by coach road and Railway, the Dominion shall, within three years from the date of Union, construct and open for traffic such coach road from some point on the line of the Main Trunk Road of this Colony to Fort Garry, of similar character to the said Main Trunk Road, and shall further engage to use all means in her power to complete such Railway communication at the earliest practicable date, and that the surveys to determine the proper line for such Railway, shall be at once commenced, and that a sum of not less than \$1,000,000 shall be expended in every year from and after three years from the date of Union, in actually constructing the initial sections of such Railway from the seaboard of British Columbia to connect with the Railway system of Canada."

On presenting those Terms at Ottawa, and discussing them with the Canadian Government, an alteration of this clause was proposed to the British Columbia delegates, with respect to the Railway, as follows:—

"The Government of the Dominion undertake to secure the commencement simultaneously within two years from the date of Union, of the construction of a Railway from the Pacific towards the Rocky Mountains, and from such point as may be selected east of the Rocky Mountains, towards the Pacific, to connect the seaboard of British Columbia with the Railway system of Canada; and further, to secure the completion of such Railway within ten years from the date of Union."

That condition or term in the Act of Union was a voluntary proposal of the Government of Canada. The Government of British Columbia proposed that we should undertake the construction of a Railway at the rate of \$1,000,000 a year, which, if the estimate of the Chief Engineer that it would cost \$100,000,000 be correct, would require 100 years

instead of ten to complete the Pacific Railway. My contention is, that, so far as this Parliament is concerned, we are not bound by the Terms of Union respecting the Railway in the absolute sense or to the extent which some hon. gentlemen even on this side of the House contend. It was a voluntary proposal of our own; a *nudum pactum* as lawyers would say, because we received no consideration for it. It is true the British Columbia delegates did not object to it. They were very glad to find that the people of Canada were so anxious to establish rapid transit across the continent. But that, like any other decision of Parliament, was subject to modification. The condition that the resources of the country would enable the Government to "secure the completion" of the work in ten years was always understood. Nay, more, it was expressly stipulated. We promised British Columbia, and we promised everybody, that we would build the Railway if we could. But Parliament did not deprive itself of its legal, natural, constitutional right to modify or repeal any law in the Statute-book, or any schemes or undertakings which might be found impracticable. British Columbia, being a part of the Dominion, can have no right to complain, unless it can show that we have the means, or that they are within our reach, and that it is to the interest of the country to proceed with the construction of the Railway in their Province. As members of this House, and representatives of a portion of the people of the Dominion, hon. gentlemen from British Columbia have the right to present their case in the best way they can. But to say that the transactions of 1871 are in the nature of a Treaty, that this Dominion consists of separate parts which have Treaty obligations one with another, and that we are bound at all hazards, and under all circumstances, whether we have the means or not, to carry out everything that a previous Parliament may have proposed in reference to public works in any Province—that proposition, Mr. Speaker, cannot be maintained; I, at all events, am not able to accept it. I come now to consider the position we are in to-day. We have undertaken the construction of this Railway. We have yielded to the demands of the members from British Co-

lumbia, on the ground that we undertook to perform a contract which happens to be advantageous to them, though it threatens ruin, or great embarrassment to the older Provinces. I find that we are actually engaged in the construction of the Pacific Railway from the head of Lake Superior to the waters of the Pacific. It has been surveyed, different lines have been proposed, and, at last, the leaders of the two great political parties in this country have concurred in the selection of a particular line in British Columbia, and the contracts have been given out for the purpose of constructing that initial section. We are now called upon by the hon. member for West Durham and the hon. member for Lambton, the First Minister of the late Government, to halt. The grounds upon which we are urged to adopt that course are, that the country is in a depressed condition; that we have neither money nor credit, or, if we have credit, we ought not to use it in borrowing the money to proceed with that work; that there is no country to be developed by this particular portion of the line in British Columbia; that the country through which the line is to pass on this side of the mountains, is not what it is represented to be; that it is, in fact, a poor country, and here, Sir, let me say I was much surprised and pained last night, to hear the hon. member for Lambton reading old volumes by the hour, for the purpose of showing that there was a great deal of swamp, a great deal of alkaline and sandy country, vast reaches of uncultivable land, between Red River and the foot of the Rocky Mountains. He told us there were only about 80,000,000 acres of good land in the whole country, which he seemed to think an insignificant amount, but if he will look at the area of some European countries, which make a considerable figure in the world, he will find they have less than 80,000,000 acres of arable land. Yet they maintain armies and fleets, and support very costly Governments. I regard that hon. gentleman as more blameable, more deserving of censure, than any hon. member of this House, for decrying the financial and material resources of our country, because he was lately at the head of a Reform Government, a Government that appealed to and was supported by the

people, on the ground that they represented the party of Progress, that they would exercise economy in public affairs, that they would be careful of the public purse, which they said their opponents had dealt with extravagantly. Hon. gentlemen opposite were supported because of these pledges, and how did they redeem them? We find that soon after their accession to power, the public expenditure increased beyond all former example. We find that they had a succession of deficits during their entire existence as a Government. The previous Government had undertaken to complete this public work within ten years. That improvident bargain was the great point of objection. It was something terrible. The hon. gentleman, eloquent as we know him to be, especially on the stump, pointed out to the astonished electors that the previous Government were unworthy of confidence, because they had undertaken this enormous project to construct the Pacific Railway within ten years. Why, he said, all the money that could be raised by the Imperial Government would fail to carry out such a work in that time! It was of no consequence to tell the hon. gentleman that the "ten years" was mentioned in these terms merely for the purpose of indicating that the Government of the day would proceed earnestly and continuously with the construction of this work. He persisted in the assertion that time was of the essence of the contract with British Columbia, though neither the people of that Province nor their representatives had ever so understood it. They never contended that it was an essential condition, the non-performance of which would void the agreement, that the Pacific Railway should be completed in that particular period of time. Why, Sir, neither the Government nor their engineers knew at that time that it was possible to construct the Railway at all. It was not known as a matter of engineering that we could pass the canyons of the Fraser or penetrate the Cascade Mountains and thus reach the waters of the Pacific. I do not think it has been made quite clear yet, that we can do it without enormous expenditure. Under these circumstances, before there had been a survey, before we knew the character of the country beyond

Lake Superior, before we knew what difficulties would be encountered in passing the Rocky Mountains and the Cascade Range, the hon. gentleman endeavoured to persuade the people that the previous Government had bound the Dominion to construct that work within ten years *coute que coute*. Sir, there was no such condition. It was never contemplated that that work should be completed within that time, unless an easy line could be found, and unless the circumstances and revenues of the country would permit it. It was so understood in this House. I was sitting on the Opposition side of the House at the time, and associated with Sir Alexander T. Galt and other independent members, insisted, in order to make the point clear, upon a Resolution of Parliament that this work should be proceeded with, provided it could be done without increasing the then rate of taxation. The right hon. gentleman, then leader of the Government, being absent in Washington, Sir George E. Cartier, who, in his absence led the House, found so many of his own supporters concurring with us, that he consented to adopt that Resolution, and it was passed while the delegates from British Columbia were sitting beside the Speaker's Chair. Now, with these facts in view, what course did the hon. gentleman opposite take when he came into office? He complained of this ten years' limit, yet he assumed the responsibility of constructing the Railway as a public or Government work, and he sent to England and invoked the interference of Lord Carnarvon, then Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Mr. MACKENZIE: No.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: What did you do?

Mr. MACKENZIE: I invoked the assistance of no one.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: Who invoked the interference of Lord Carnarvon?

Mr. MACKENZIE: The British Columbia people.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: Then the British Columbia people proceeded to England. I happened to be there myself at the time. Mr. Walkem came to London to complain of bad faith on the part of the Canadian Government, and the result was that Lord Carnarvon was invited to offer his services, and the hon. gentle-

men opposite consented to accept his services, and agreed to abide by his arbitration as to the millions which were to be expended yearly by Canada up to 1890. Mr. Walkem talked over the matter with me, and I endeavoured to persuade him that he would not be serving the interests of British Columbia in taking any such ground as he proposed; that Canada would proceed, under any Administration, to open up the great North-West, and then the necessity of crossing the mountains to a Pacific terminus in British Columbia would be admitted by all parties, and he would get his Railway as soon as it was possible to obtain it, under any circumstances; that to quarrel with Canada, and attempt to enforce a literal fulfilment of these rigid terms, would result in failure. Lord Carnarvon did me the honour to confer, informally, with me upon the matter. I felt it my duty as a Canadian, and as a public man, to warn him against burning his fingers by undertaking to arbitrate between Canada and British Columbia in that matter. But that nobleman, being anxious to remove all obstacles to the consolidation of British North America, because he was the Minister under whose authority the scheme of Confederation was planned, undertook the difficult and, as I think, ill advised office of Arbitrator, and the hon. gentleman opposite, the great Reformer, the great constitutionalist, abdicated his functions as a responsible Minister, and placed this Parliament and the people of this country in a false position, when he left it to a person in no way responsible to us, to say that we should spend \$2,000,000 a year in the construction of a Railway in British Columbia. That was a highly unconstitutional act in my view. It was a destructive blow aimed at the most essential principle upon which our constitutional system is founded. If the Government of the day can hand over the purse-strings of the nation to any one, even to the sovereign herself, to fix the amount and to specify the objects of expenditure, without, in the first place, consulting the representatives of the people in Parliament assembled, it has ceased to be the Government of a free country. The bargain was struck, the reference made, and the award of \$2,000,000 a year in favour of British

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Columbia was rendered. The hon. gentleman brought down that proposition after the Arbitrator had given his judgment, and he succeeded in obtaining a *quasi* consent from Parliament. I do not know, for I was not a member of this House at the time, that it was ever formally approved, but assent, if any, was gained in such a manner, the case was conducted upon such false premises, that I, for one, was not surprised to find the vice of its origin prevailing it through all its stages. The hon. gentleman has been charged—I do not say justly charged—with having himself procured, by some underhand method, the defeat of his scheme in the Senate. Now, we have another Government in power and we have the Railway question still before us. We are called upon to say, by our vote on this Resolution, whether the work is to proceed in British Columbia or not. I confess, if I were free from these antecedent facts, which I think are binding to a certain extent upon this Parliament, I would hesitate to proceed. But as a supporter of the Government in one or two important matters, if not in all, I cannot well see how, in view of what has taken place between the British and Canadian Governments, in view of the money already expended upon surveys and actual construction beyond Lake Superior, in view of the fact that the hon. gentleman and his colleagues had adopted this very line in British Columbia, I can ask the present Government to reverse a policy to which most of its members have long been committed and refuse to proceed with at least a portion of the work in British Columbia. It is quite true if our financial position were such that we could not raise money enough to carry on the Government, and execute the great Public Works we have in hand, I should say that the Government must be carried on and the Public Works must stand. The interest on the Public Debt must be paid, the subsidies and charges for Civil Government must be paid, and many other items of ordinary expenditure must be met, whatever happens, and if I did not see a prospect of sufficient Revenue in the future, I would not hesitate a moment to say to hon. gentlemen on the Treasury Benches, "you must postpone this work." But is our condition desperate? Is it true, as

was stated by the hon. gentleman who last addressed the House, that we cannot proceed with this work? Is it true that the amount required is so great that neither the Revenues nor the credit of this country are able to overtake it? I do not think so. If we look at the Railway Statistics of Canada we find that some 8,000 miles of railway have been constructed in Canada within a few years, costing \$273,826,000. Of this sum the General and Local Governments have contributed about \$80,000,000. But more than two-thirds of the entire amount has been furnished by private capitalists, and the purchasers of bonds sold in the market. I am not aware that the country has felt any severe pressure on account of the investment of this immense amount of capital in our railways, or that we have suffered from over-construction of railways beyond the needs of the country. I think if we look at the question in that light the dangers and difficulties that have been conjured up on the other side of the House will disappear. I believe railway men can be found with the capital at their backs to take up this Railway from Thunder Bay to its Pacific terminus at Yale, and for a subsidy of 40,000,000 or 50,000,000 acres of land as originally proposed, complete the sections that have not yet been contracted for. I believe there is no difficulty in finding a solvent company who would undertake to complete the Pacific Railway on those terms, and agree to keep it in repair and work it. The moment capitalists are convinced that this great Empire of ours in the West has within it even 80,000,000 acres of arable land, the moment they are satisfied that the immigration which has set in is likely to continue, that its climatic difficulties have been exaggerated, that wheat can be produced there in enormous quantities, and of superior quality to any grown in other parts of this continent, there will be no difficulty in finding a company willing to undertake the construction, at their own risk, of the balance of this great highway. I am told upon reliable information that at Minneapolis the millers will give ten cents a bushel more for wheat grown beyond the International Boundary than for wheat grown a few degrees south of it. For ages those vast and fertile plains have been covered with millions of

buffalo, subsisting upon the natural herbage of the soil, and we all know that domestic cattle are closely allied to the buffalo. So we have there a country that can produce both meat and breadstuffs in abundance, and this fact alone, with conditions for the incoming settler as favourable as those offered to him in the United States, will, now that the tide of settlement is steadily flowing westward, guarantee ample traffic for at least one trunk line of communication. The fact is that the population going into the country and the products coming out of it will, from the day it is opened, pay the running expenses and the interest on the capital. I therefore have no apprehension on the score of ultimate indemnity, and while I feel confident that our position and prospects are such as to warrant the Government in going on with the work, I should like to be sure that no more expenditure will be made than is absolutely necessary until we are a little farther advanced. Hon. gentlemen opposite have stated that the Tariff is the great difficulty, and that its operation will tend to prevent the prosecution of the work. On that point I will just say, that in my opinion that question was most fully discussed and considered by the electors of this country at the last election, and with what result? 40,000 Liberals voted in favour of the candidates supporting the present Premier. Why? Not because of his antecedents as a party politician, or the principles he was supposed to hold, but because they had confidence in his statesmanship and patriotism and his intention to carry out his pledge to protect the industries of the country. Well, Sir, the people having demanded that the industries of this country should be protected by a rearrangement of the Tariff, I venture to suggest that it is no compliment to our institutions, no compliment to the intelligence of the people of this Dominion, to tell them, before the policy they resolved upon has had a fair trial, "You made a mistake in demanding that policy." On the contrary, I think the great mistake the hon. member for West Durham makes, as a politician, is this,—he is setting himself up against the declared opinion, the settled verdict of the people. He, a lawyer, for many years buried in his briefs, sets himself up as an expert in finance and trade,

in opposition to the opinions of the commercial men, the manufacturers and the most experienced public men of the country, and contemns the judgment of the people at large in calling for the National Policy! He, a Liberal, a man of the people, comes here and declares that the Government is deserving of censure for carrying out the well-understood wishes of the people! Sir, it is a mistake to do this. The National Policy must have a fair trial. It has already proved a success, financially, inasmuch as it has given us, instead of a deficit of \$2,000,000—the normal condition under the hon. gentleman and his friends—a deficit of only half a million. It is the duty of the Government to maintain and carry out this policy. It is also its duty to exercise economy in the administration of public affairs. I was afraid just before the opening of the House, that the hon. the Minister of Railways would attempt to carry out his idea of building the Railway on the north shore of Lake Superior, but I am glad to find that the hon. gentleman's colleagues have induced him to abandon that part of the line for the present. I am also glad to find that it has been decided to proceed cautiously with the work in British Columbia. Under all these circumstances, I shall oppose the Resolution of the hon. member for West Durham. If the mover of the Resolution were logical, he would demand the abandonment of the work in British Columbia. Instead of doing that, he only asks for delay, and thereby affirms that the road shall be built at some future time. But probably the Resolution was framed in this way, to denounce the hon. gentleman's former leader, and to contradict the assertion of the organ of his party, that the Railway should be pushed on as rapidly as possible. But the motion is also a declaration of want of confidence in the Government. In view of all that has been said in favour of the Resolution, as respects its language and form—which has been little—and as respects its political consequences, if adopted, which, though not expressed, we can infer, I believe no independent supporter of the Government can possibly vote for it. I, at all events, will not assist to turn out the present Government in order to turn in the Government of the hon. member for Lambton.